

Corridor Safety and Operational Study of Charles Town Pike (Route 9)

Focus Group Meeting #2 Wednesday, September 30, 2020, 6:00 PM Meeting Summary

Public Agency Attendees & Study Team Representatives:

Jonathan Bales (Office of Supervisor Kershner)
Katie Patru (Office of Supervisor Buffington)
Chris Shore (Loudoun County Sheriff's Office)
Regina Moore (VDOT)
John Thomas, Kelly Griffin, Susan Glass, Heidi Kellum (DTCI)
Michelle Cavucci, Nat Grier, Craig Schneider (VHB)

Focus Group Members:

John McCarthy
*Piedmont Environmental
Council*

Maura Walsh-Copeland
*LCPCZ Zoning Committee
Chair*

John Ellis
Save Rural Loudoun

John Lovegrove
*Cider Mill Road Area
Resident*

Vice Mayor Amy
Marasco
Town of Hillsboro

John Mulhall
Saratoga HOA

Jane Rudolph
*Beacon Hills Community
Association*

Donnie Walker
*Paeonian Springs and
Property/Business Owner*

Phil DeLeon
Private Citizen

Kelly Foltman
*Greater Hillsboro Business
Alliance*

Alta Jones
*Rural Economic
Development Council*

Gwen Wilf
Hillsboro Charter Academy

Mayor Roger Vance
Town of Hillsboro

Public Observers:

Lisa Campbell
Patricia Macchi
Paul Anderson
Martha Polkey

Introduction & Purpose

JT Thomas facilitated introductions and shared details of the virtual meeting platform, due to COVID-19 restrictions and pursuant to the re-adoption of the ordinance adopted by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors on September 15, 2020. Michelle Cavucci introduced the goals of the meeting, which are to review and obtain feedback on outcomes of the first Focus Group meeting, a summary of the public survey, and existing traffic and safety conditions, as well as to present the 2040 traffic forecast.

Agenda

The virtual meeting materials, including the PowerPoint slides and handouts, can be downloaded from the Loudoun County project page at <https://www.loudoun.gov/route9>. These materials provide a summary of the key topics covered during this meeting, including:

- Recap of Previous Focus Group Meeting
- Public Survey Results Summary
- Existing Conditions Summary
- Travel Demand & Forecasting
- Next-Term Next Steps.

General Themes & Comments

Throughout the collaborative discussion, common themes were revealed based on comments from the Focus Group members. These are summarized below.

- 1) Several Focus Group members commented on the contrasting characteristics of Route 9, noting concerns for congestion during peak periods, safety, and driver behavior, while also seeing the beauty of the rural road, the scenic connection to the natural environment, and link to local business.
 - a. Mentioned safety concerns include poor driver behavior and segments of the road with less than ideal conditions such as curves or lack of shoulders. Focus Group members understood the public survey input regarding driver behavior being a cause for concern along Route 9.
- 2) The priority rankings from the public input survey did not surprise Focus Group members and this information is consistent with what was stated at the first Focus Group meeting on February 13, 2020. One member was surprised to see congestion relief ranked lower on the scale of top priorities. Many members were happy to see rural character ranked high and they want to see corridor improvements that offer a balance of mobility and character.
- 3) Crash rates along Route 9 were presented and compared to other roadways throughout the state and Northern Virginia. It was noted that the corridor crash rates along Route 9 were similar to other rural minor arterials and one Focus Group member stated that people perceive this roadway to be more dangerous than what the data is showing.
- 4) Speed was a reoccurring topic during the meeting, specifically:

- a. Mention of the perception that commuters from West Virginia are cutting through the communities along Route 9 and driving well above the posted speed limits. To that end, another member also noted that there are also drivers from Virginia using Route 9 heading to West Virginia attractions such as the race track and casinos.
 - b. Focus Group members wanted to keep speed reduction in mind when reviewing and developing alternatives for the corridor. Members also advocated for rerouting through traffic and looking for alternative routes instead of drivers using the Route 9 corridor. Members mentioned that they appreciate Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) enforcing the posted speed limit along Route 9 when possible. Speed enforcement is difficult along the corridor as LCSO cannot park in private driveways. The study team has been working with LCSO and have identified several proposed law enforcement areas along the corridor.
 - c. Speed and driver behavior issues cannot just be solved with enforcement and engineering; therefore, education is another key to this solution.
- 5) Consideration of permanent through truck restrictions on Route 9 was of interest to multiple Focus Group members, as through trucks are using temporary alternate routes during the Town of Hillsboro roadway construction. Through truck restrictions are not part of the scope of work for the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operations Study. The current Virginia Code and criteria in the guidelines indicate Route 9 is not a typical corridor for such through truck restrictions. The Focus Group still felt this issue was important to pursue. The study team will further investigate the crash data as it relates to trucks and more details regarding this subject are offered in the attached Comments and Questions with Study Team Answers document.
- 6) The 2040 traffic forecast and traffic volumes were reviewed, and several members noted the higher growth rates occurring along the western portion of the corridor to/from West Virginia compared to the projected rates east of the Town of Hillsboro.
- a. The travel demand model and traffic forecasts indicate increased volumes on side streets, specifically vehicles using Route 9 to the far west. Instead of staying on Route 9, vehicles use north-south routes on the western end of the corridor to travel to/from Route 7. This travel pattern is due to proposed future improvements and increased capacity and access to Route 7 making it a more desirable option under those future conditions.
 - b. Members of the Focus Group were concerned with increases in the number of vehicles projected to use Cider Mill Road (to Woodgrove Road) and Hillsboro Road to head north/south to and from Route 7 in 2040. The Focus Group is concerned that current roadway design and condition of these side streets are not ready to accommodate increases in volume. Focus Group members noted that the VDOT should update their maintenance schedule along rural roadways to accommodate these future impacts.
- 7) The Focus Group requested to receive draft alternative concepts in advance of the next Focus Group meeting so that they can be thoroughly reviewed.

Separate attachments are also provided that include specific Focus Group member questions with study team answers, and comments that were made in the Chat box by other meeting attendees.

**Safety and Operational Study of Charles Town Pike (Route 9)
Blue Ridge and Catoctin Election Districts**

**Focus Group Meeting #2
Wednesday, September 30, 2020
6:00 – 7:45 PM**

**Summary of Focus Group Member Comments and Questions with
Study Team Answers**

This document summarizes the questions raised by the Focus Group members and responses from Loudoun County representatives. During the meeting, answers were not readily available for some of the questions. Answers have been augmented to include those responses following the original meeting.

Q1. There is not a way to build our way out of this situation. I look forward to the proposed engineering solutions at the safety hot spots to see where those crashes occurred and what kind of site improvements can be made to minimize those in the future. The goal is to maintain the character of the road but also to address the needed safety improvements that we all recognize are present and due to geometry and other issues.	
A1:	The emphasis on maintaining character while addressing the corridor safety problems is acknowledged. The hot spot locations were shared during the Focus Group meeting and the recommended short-term improvements at those locations are under review by VDOT and will be shared in the future. Such solutions include signs, markings, and other easily-implementable, proven safety countermeasures. Longer-term improvements at these locations will be considered as part of the future year alternatives analyses.
Q2. Is there a way to see the actual data behind the traffic forecasting slides because some of the assumptions would possibly answer some the questions that have already been raised regarding vehicles that may be turning off Route 9 to other north/south routes? Because if we are supposed to be giving the Focus Group input, we need the data to be able to look at it firsthand.	
A2:	<p>A travel demand model and how it is applied to develop a forecast is a complex process that is not possible to convey in the form of simple data. The future traffic projections were developed from the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model. This model incorporates the latest future land use and roadway network improvements, which were documented, approved, and adopted in the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan. The model has been reviewed by VDOT and deemed in alignment with their modeling best practices and suitable for traffic forecasting applications.</p> <p>The Loudoun County Travel Demand Model is a computer program based on a series of mathematical equations that simulates the performance of the transportation system given a set of land use conditions. It estimates trip generation (how much travel), trip distribution (who goes where), mode choice (how people travel), and route choice. The model was not applied as a black box for this corridor study. To develop future traffic forecasts and</p>

	<p>estimated growth for location-specific studies such as Route 9, the model is considered in combination with other data such as historic growth. The growth factors developed for Route 9 were also reviewed and approved by VDOT.</p> <p>For those who are interested in exploring the Loudoun County Travel Demand model files, please contact the Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study team through email Route9@loudoun.gov or by phone 703-737-8299.</p>
<p>Q3. What other previous studies and corridor decisions (either former CTP decisions or NVTA study outcomes) are going to be reviewed as part of this study and will they be given any consideration or are they not being addressed at all for this study?</p> <p>Following the meeting, Maura Walsh-Copeland provided more detail behind this question through a phone call and email. Specifically, the question was whether the study team would be considering earlier CTP considerations and Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance recommendations associated with a new bypass roadway that would connect Route 9 to Route 7 west Hillsboro.</p>	
A3:	<p>The historical perspective offered by previous studies along Route 9 are certainly important for understanding previous community interests and context. However, the study team was asked to revisit the needs of this corridor with a renewed approach. The Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study is not working toward any predetermined outcome from earlier studies; rather, the current study is looking forward, and will be guided by the policy framework in the Adopted Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan. Any and all information that is collected through public survey and this Focus Group will be reviewed by the study team to help develop a detailed understanding of the corridor, including more current public perspectives, travel experiences, and roadway priorities.</p> <p>To provide further background into this need for a renewed look, the rural corridor safety and operational studies were requested by the Board of Supervisors during the 2017 Transportation Summit. Documents related to that direction are accessible through the links that follow.</p> <p><u>2017 Transportation Summit:</u> June 29, 2017 Rural Primary Roads Presentation June 29, 2017 Rural Primary Roads BOS Information Item #6</p> <p><u>Subsequent Direction from Board of Supervisors Business Meeting July 3, 2018</u> July 3, 2018 Rural Primary Roads BOS Action Item #4</p> <p>The Countywide Transportation Plan also acknowledges this study is being conducted. Specifically, on the Countywide Transportation Plan roadway maps in Appendix 1, Note (VI) "Safety and operational studies will be conducted along primary roadways in the Rural Policy Area to assess current roadway conditions and identify potential solutions to improve traffic flow and safety. Improvements based on these studies will be implemented as directed by the Board of Supervisors."</p>

	The recommendations from the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study and what improvements are advanced forward will ultimately depend on a combination of technical findings, community input, and decisions from the Board of Supervisors.
Q4. With the travel demand model, it seems to be a black box. I do not know what assumptions are behind all the numbers that were presented. It would be helpful to know how that model works and what those assumptions are in order to understand how it relates to the projected population growth rates in the rural areas?	
A4:	Please see the related response to Q2 above.
Q5. Through trucks using Route 9 continue to be an issue. What the reason is for taking it off the table for this study? It does not really make sense to take an important issue off the table as all these issues are related and should be addressed together and not divided up.	
A5:	<p>Permanent through truck restrictions are not part of the scope of the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study. The Virginia Code and criteria in the guidelines indicate Route 9 is not a typical corridor for such restrictions. (Refer to § 46.2-809 of the Code of Virginia for further information on through truck restrictions.) Additionally, the process in Virginia requires the local governing body to hold a Public Hearing and present a specific request to VDOT, where VDOT will consider how the subject roadway meets the criteria set forth in VDOT guidelines. No such request or interest had been presented at the time the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study was initiated and any such process would follow an independent path from the corridor study.</p> <p>The study team acknowledges that the Focus Group still finds truck safety to be an important issue. The study includes an assessment of crash data as it relates to trucks.</p> <p>Through Truck Restrictions are not being considered on Route 9 as part of this particular County study. To initiate a through truck restriction request, please contact the appropriate District Supervisor.</p> <p>For more information on VDOT's Through Truck Restriction Program please see the following Frequently Asked Questions and Adopted Guidelines links below.</p> <p> VDOT Through Truck Restriction Program – Frequently Asked Questions VDOT Through Truck Restriction Program – Adopted Guidelines </p>
Q6. I think it might be helpful to break out the accident data between cars and trucks just to determine if asking the questions about trucks is appropriate.	
A6:	Please see also related response to Q5. The study team is considering truck involvement in review of the crash data.

Q7. Please review the VDOT standard for residential and commercial driveways, especially for drainage and other things that would facilitate business and residents getting in their driveway plus sight distance.

A7: It is not within the scope of this corridor study to review existing conditions or design elements such as drainage for all private driveways or commercial parcel entrances. If crash data revealed a specific angle crash pattern at a particular driveway or public roadway, then sight distance would have been investigated.

Q8. If we are going to have a shared use path, is it going to be separated and what are you going to do with driveways and intersections? For the crossings, these will have to be separated because if you put them along the roadway, it will increase the speed.

A8: For the sections of Route 9 outside of the Town of Hillsboro, the 2019 Countywide Transportation Plan calls for a shared use path on one side of Route 9. Such a path would be parallel to and outside of the travel lanes and beyond the edge of the pavement area established for vehicles. For cross streets that intersection Route 9, the path would cross those side streets at grade. The ultimate design of those crossings would need to take into consideration the future intersection control (e.g., stop-control, signal, roundabout) and follow established guidelines and standards for crossing design.

Q9. Trying to keep the flow moving along Route 9 at a reasonable pace is the main objective, but there is concern with the decrease of traffic on Route 9. Can we make sure we are not syphoning off traffic onto all the secondary roads, such as Woodgrove Road? From past studies, the attempt to make Woodgrove Road another major road (and that means widening the road) would not sit well with others.

A9: The results from the traffic forecasting effort revealed a future travel pattern whereby vehicles from the western end of Route 9 may choose a path to/from Route 7 using minor north-south roadways to the west, such as Woodgrove Road. History and driver behavior tell us that drivers will choose the path of least resistance, whether that be for convenience, travel experience, or reduced travel time. The proposed improvements that are programmed to be implemented on Route 7 by 2040 make Route 7 a preferred east-west route choice for some drivers over Route 9. This is not an intentional choice by the study team and the intent is not to make those north-south routes major roadways. The intent is to understand resulting future traffic volumes on Route 9 to assess the necessary improvements to Route 9 to accommodate the future traffic.

However, the additional volumes on the minor roadways were certainly recognized by the study team and the Focus Group, and the concern for existing conditions of those roadways were noted in the meeting record.

Q10. What we can do to the cars coming from West Virginia? Can we encourage them to go along Route 340, or perhaps work with West Virginia in other ways to get traffic heading south before crossing the Virginia border? Was the upcoming widening of Route 340 part of the future year travel demand model and considered in the future travel patterns?

A10: This question was asked in the context of the future traffic forecasts. Generally speaking, while it is possible to encourage drivers to take alternate routes through guide signs or other messaging, such a change is not something that would result in a change in the traffic forecasts being applied for future year analyses, as this is not quantifiable to a degree that would impact the estimated volumes. As Route 9 is a public roadway, primary route, and minor arterial, its function for serving general through traffic is critical to the performance of the overall roadway network.

The 2040 travel demand model applied for this study does include the widened, four-lane condition for Route 340.

Q11. Has an analysis of speed data been conducted, particularly at the hot spots that do not include a traffic signal?

A11: Speed data was collected at key locations along the corridor and is available in the Focus Group notebooks and on the [project website](#) in the Focus Group Meeting #1 materials. The findings were also elaborated on in greater details during the Public Input Meeting [presentation](#) and [slides](#). The hot spots that do not include a traffic signal are:

- Segment from Shady Lane to the Sweet Springs Country Store
- Segment east of Sagle Road
- Segment east of Clarkes Gap Road.

Generally speaking, crash data did not reveal that speed was a priority safety trend to be addressed in these hot spots. According to the crash records, speed was a factor in 8.7 percent of the crashes that were analyzed in these hot spots.

Q12. We routinely see speeds well in excess of the posted limits, sometimes greater than 20 mph over the posted limits as drivers come down the hill from the border with West Virginia.

Could you tell us what is being done to address excessive speeds in this area as well as improving access to entering Route 9 from side streets and driveways. Have you considered ways to address this traffic?

A12: Please see also the related answer to Q11 with details of where to find speed data.

Speed data was collected at locations along the corridor, including the area to the west between Shady Lane and Sagle Road. The data at this location did reveal higher speeds in the eastbound direction compared to the westbound direction, as noted by the comment. The 85th percentile speed* at this location was 58 mph in the eastbound direction and 54 mph in the westbound direction. The posted speed limit is 50 mph. While traveling above

	<p>the speed limit is not lawful, it is not uncommon to see operating speeds 5-7 mph above a posted speed limit.</p> <p>There are short-term improvements recommended, which are currently under review by VDOT, to alert drivers to conditions in the area when entering from West Virginia and to provide areas on the roadside in certain locations for easier enforcement by the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. Entering from side streets and driveways is a challenge resulting from lack of available gaps in traffic on Route 9 (i.e., higher traffic volume) as well as higher travel speeds of those vehicles. Long-term alternatives will be evaluated and may include changes to intersection control at public roadways, such as new traffic signals or roundabouts, when deemed appropriate according to federal and state guidelines.</p> <p><i>*The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of drivers travel at or below during the data collection period.</i></p>
Q13. Can the study to look at park and ride possibilities at the West Virginia/Virginia border?	
A13:	<p>There is a partner agency meeting scheduled with the West Virginia Department of Transportation, during which commuting patterns will be discussed, as well as Park & Ride area needs for travelers from West Virginia.</p>
Q14. Please review sign design standards as we need to look at signage for appropriate rural businesses. It is important to have a beautiful look to the corridor with sign standards that encourage slow traffic as well as attendance to our businesses.	
A14:	<p>VDOT has specific standards and programs for signs for businesses. Some of them, such as Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS), appear more like a typical roadway sign. There are others, which often have more visual interest, that can be proposed under the Community Wayfinding Sign program. When well crafted, such signs can be used to educate and inspire the travelling public and promote visitation to destinations and establish a sense of place. As demonstrated in the manual linked above, a Community Wayfinding sign program is an extensive process. While it is possible that a recommendation may come from the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study regarding future sign considerations and wayfinding signs, the intent of this study is not to carry out the full Community Wayfinding Sign process to plan and design such signs.</p> <p>Other signs on Route 9 related to public roadway travel will need to remain in accordance with the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).</p>
Q15. Truck restrictions will need to move forward in the appropriate form to be addressed.	
A15:	<p>The emphasis of through truck concerns made by certain Focus Group members is acknowledged. Please see also the related response to Q5 above.</p>

Q16. The current and future travel model data shows that secondary road use is inevitable. People are going to take those small roads regardless of their conditions. We need to start the process to not let these roadways not become commuter routes as well as finding ways to reduce travel speeds, restrict traffic, and ensure these items in the future.

A16: Please see also the answer to Q9. The issue and concern for these roadways is acknowledged and it is possible that future study of those roads may be a recommendation of the Route 9 corridor study.

Q17. It is really important to not just lower the speed limit, but to enforcement it with increase fines. The speed can be reduced from Route 7 to Route 704 (Hamilton Station Road) by 10 mph and improve safety with little cost and no change to the roadway within that area.

A17: At the location in question, speed data collected by the study team revealed:

- Just east of Hamilton Station Road, the 85th percentile speed* was 54 mph (9 mph over the posted speed limit)
- Between Clarkes Gap Road and Route 7, the 85th percentile speed was 51 mph (6-10 mph over the posted speed limit depending on the direction of travel)

In 2017, VDOT conducted a speed limit study for Route 9, which examined existing crash data, traffic volumes, speeds, and roadway characteristics. This previous study resulted in the speed limits that are in place today on the corridor. The Loudoun County Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study will not be revisiting those decisions already identified and recently approved by VDOT.

Research indicates that simply lowering the posted speed limit on a roadway is not likely to have the expected outcome of reduced travel speeds, which are desired by the Focus Group. Both observational studies as well as nationwide federal research has demonstrated that reducing a speed limit does not typically result in a change in driver speeds. In case studies, the majority of motorists did not alter their speed to conform to posted speed limits that they perceived as unreasonable for prevailing road and traffic conditions.

That being said, there are noted safety hot spots in the area described in this comment, and the need for safety improvement is acknowledged and supported by data. Although a change in speed limit is not being carried forward under this study, other safety improvements are proposed that are in alignment with the crash data findings, and those are under review by VDOT.

**The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of drivers travel at or below during the data collection period.*

Q18. We have observed drivers from adjacent states that are exhibiting a high amount of bad driver behavior.	
A18:	While it is not feasible to prevent drivers from other states from using Route 9, the study will be examining roadway/engineering solutions to improve safety, as well as whether educational safety campaigns may be appropriate for all roadway users.
Q19. With the two roundabouts in the Town of Hillsboro and the proposed roundabout at Berlin Turnpike and the consultant considering additional roundabouts, I would like to see some examples and hear a discussion of how the roundabouts may impact traffic flow such as creating or reducing gaps in the flow. Those who drive Route 9 especially at rush hour know how difficult it can be to turn across oncoming traffic. With traffic simulation models the flow of traffic can be evaluated near intersections or between them, I am wondering if the roundabout will improve the ability to find gaps in the traffic for turns or make it harder.	
A19:	<p>Finding gaps in traffic on Route 9 can be challenging during the peak periods for drivers turning onto Route 9 from side streets. Future baseline conditions are being modeled in traffic microsimulation software, which will include the new roundabouts in the Town of Hillsboro and at Berlin Turnpike. Additionally, proposed improvements will also be evaluated through microsimulation, and if any roundabouts are proposed as part of future alternatives, they will be included in that analysis. The simulation will demonstrate the degree to which gaps are available and whether vehicles from the side street are impacted.</p> <p>As to the examples requested, a similar question arose during the Route 9 and Berlin Turnpike project development process, specifically a concern with whether vehicles will be able to enter the roundabout from Berlin Turnpike given the volume on Route 9. A microsimulation model was developed by that project team to demonstrate that there would be sufficient gaps in the roundabout for which the vehicles could enter from Berlin Turnpike onto Route 9. For more details on that analysis, please refer to the project website.</p>
Q20. When will DTCl provide the forecasted volume data that shows the resulting traffic projects after consideration of future roadway network changes, which was displayed during the meeting?	
(This question was emailed following the meeting.)	
A20:	During the Focus Group meeting, some of the slides contained animation to show multiple pieces of information on one slide, such that mapped data was displayed in sequence one after the other. When such slides are printed, only one static image is shown. The Focus Group member was interested in the traffic volumes that were shown on Slide 25 where growth rates were also displayed. Those traffic volumes, which were displayed and discussed during the meeting, are included as an attachment to these notes.

**Safety and Operational Study of Charles Town Pike (Route 9)
Blue Ridge and Catoctin Election Districts**

**Focus Group Meeting #2
Wednesday, September 30, 2020
6:00 – 7:45 PM**

Summary of WebEx Chat Box Comments & Q&A

This document summarizes the Chat comments and questions from the general public during the second Focus Group meeting. This document summarizes these statements for documentation purposes.

Q1. Last meeting, I asked if we could find the Traffic Survey and projections that were used in 2005 to justify a bypass. It was a VDOT study that was done in 2003 or 2004. With one of our attendees being from VDOT, can you please take an action item to request that study from VDOT and let us know if they have it? I am very interested in testing the model used for growth, there was a predicted level of traffic for 2020.	
A1:	Thank you for the reminder of this previous discussion, as the study team did not recall a request specific to VDOT for this information. Please send an email requesting this information to Route9@loudoun.gov and Loudoun County will forward this question to the VDOT participant.
Q2. We need to unpack the travel demand model.	
A2:	Comment acknowledged.
Q3. Does the public have access to the model?	
A3:	<p>Please see also documented Questions & Answers from the first Public Input Meeting, where several questions were addressed regarding the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model.</p> <p>To request the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model files, please contact the Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study team through email Route9@loudoun.gov or by phone 703-737-8299.</p>
Q4. The current conditions with Route 9 closed has routed lots of traffic down Cider Mill Road and Woodgrove Road. There are many problems in the last six months that have resulted in dangerous conditions.	
A4:	The study team acknowledges the projected changes in traffic volumes on these roads in the future and the comment regarding conditions during the local detour from the Town of Hillsboro project. Please see also related responses in the Focus Group Meeting #2

	Comments and Questions with Study Team Answers where this was addressed in more detail.
Q5. We do not want our secondary roads south of Route 9 to become major arterials for traffic to siphon off to Route 7.	
A5:	Please see related responses to this issue in the Focus Group Meeting #2 Comments and Questions with Study Team Answers, where this topic was addressed in more detail.
Q6. I am definitely concerned about the speed limit on Route 9 going into Paeonian Springs from Route 7.	
A6:	Please see related response to this issue in the Focus Group Meeting #2 Comments and Questions with Study Team Answers, where this topic was addressed in more detail.
Q7. Today: interstate traffic negatively impacts Loudoun citizens' experience and business owners' profitability. Route 9 Traffic Calming Project has tried to invite commuters to respect the community while proceeding in an orderly manner through the corridor.	
A7:	The study team acknowledges the efforts of the Town of Hillsboro and the community desires with that project. As Route 9 is a public roadway, primary route, and minor arterial, its function for serving general through traffic is critical to the performance of the overall roadway network; it is not possible to prevent travelers from other states from using the roadway.
Q8. Can you ask for previous slide to "results of group activities"?	
A8:	Focus Group materials are provided on the Loudoun County project webpage .
Q9. The point is what designs will retain the scenic attributes while improving safety, access, and flow.	
A9:	This comment is in alignment with public input and Focus Group statements regarding a balanced approach considering rural character, safety, operations, and access.
Q10. Mobility, other roads should be enhanced: Why is the county and the consultant pitting communities against each other? Route 9 vs. Route 287 vs. Route 15? What a horrible template for addressing concerns!	
A10:	This question was asked in the context of the public input survey. This concept of rerouting or attracting traffic to other roads (e.g., Route 7 where increased capacity is planned in the future) was specifically asked by the Focus Group in Meeting #1 and led to the inclusion of this topic in the public input survey.

Q11. Future volumes are a function of a vision: Must we accommodate every land development whim, or every road consumer whim, no matter the long-term social, environmental, and fiscal cost (of endless maintenance)? Or should a vision accommodate fiscal conservatism, climate change, encouraging telecommuting and transit? And Loudoun citizens' vision with what they want for the future of Western Loudoun?	
A11:	Vision, land use, and other such topics were vetted in a thorough process to develop the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors. That plan is the basis for the County Travel Demand Model and future volumes referenced in the comment. In accordance with standards of practice and VDOT guidelines, the Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study must utilize these planning resources.
Q12. Loudoun's mode for future travel demand model does not meet federal guidelines. This has been reported for the past 14 years. It uses TAZ zones and a regional model and is not based upon zoning or citizen desires.	
A12:	The future traffic projections were developed from the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model. This model incorporates the latest future land use and roadway network improvements, which were documented, approved, and adopted in the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan. The model has been reviewed by VDOT and deemed in alignment with their modeling best practices and suitable for traffic forecasting applications. The FHWA has helped produce a number of guidance documents regarding travel model best practices. It recognizes that every region, and thus travel model, is by necessity unique. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is the general and permanent rules published by the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal government. Federal standards, set forth in 23 CFR Part 450 and 40 CFR Part 93, around travel modeling relate to the use of travel models to estimate vehicle emissions and the determination of conformity. In particular, these standards only apply to "serious, severe or extreme ozone or serious carbon monoxide non-attainment areas"; Loudoun County (and the Washington DC MPO of which it is a part), does not fall into this classification that are compiled regionally. Regional models assist in establishing the baseline existing conditions for households, population, and employment, but the future land use projections for the number of households, population, and employment are produced by the County. The regional models do not produce the future land use projections for the individual jurisdictions.
Q13. The Route 50 traffic calming project showed that if you do NOT plan for expansion, good transportation/land use planning reduces future travel.	
A13:	This corridor-specific reference is acknowledged as it relates to the Route 50 Corridor.
Q14. Bottom line for interstate traffic: Must Loudoun citizens pay for the desires of out-of-state commuters?	
A14:	Please see related response to Q7.



5) Travel Demand and Forecasting

2040 No Build Scenario

- No additional improvements
- Volumes are rounded and represent average daily traffic

VDOT 2018 AADT

2040 Forecast Growth Rate/Volume

